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To the Right Honourable, the Knights, Citizens and Burgesses, of the House of Commons assembled in Parliament,

The humble Petition of many godly true-hearted Protestants, whose names are hereafter mentioned,

Humbly sheweth,



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That whereas your Petitioners acknowledging with all thankfulness how it hath pleased God to move your hearts to endeavour the expelling and destroying of sin, Satan, Antichrist and error, and instead of them to receive, embrace, retain and cherish knowledge, faith, love and obedience, that seeing every one ought to be fully persuaded in his own minde, without which he can do nothing of faith, and so lies under sin, do humbly intreat you, that seeing many are even almost unsettled, by reason that although indeed our faithfull Ministers cry out daily against Brownists and Anabaptists for their judgment, yet will not dispute the case with them, pretending they are not worthy their dispute: To which they answer it is because they know they cannot make good their owne praictice from the Word of God, nor can prove their Church, their Ministry, their Baptism nor their Sabbath to be instituted by God, or owned by Christ and his Apostles. Of which number if there were onely a few ignorant profane persons, it would not much move us, but that which almost astonisheth us to think is, that some of them whom we looked on as the most eminent Protestants, most conscionable frequenters of our Churches, strictest keepers of the Sabbaths, and most strict in life and conversation, have very lately departed our Churches, and separated from us, who in former times in the want of such powerfull preaching as we by the good hand of providence by order of this honourable Assembly have enjoyed now of late in season, and out of season, whereof they aforesaid being diligent frequenters, have now very lately departed from us, as though the faithfull powerfull manifestations of the truths of God were a speciall means to cause separation from our Churches, who upon our earnest desiring them to returne to our Churches from their errors, have seemed to pitie us, and praise God for giving them light into those truths, whereof they were very long ignorant, yet at last to see and understand his way, that they might practice the same, and walke therein, and tell us, that if the Lord love us, he will shew us the same truth, whereof they being convinced, dare not but practice. Now seeing we dare not but think that many of them are very conscionable people, although holding divers errors, as namely, they deny our Churches, our Ministers, our Baptisme and our Sabbath to be of Christ, or to have any footing in his Word, as also to be unlawfull to pay tithes to any Minister of the Gospell: and indeed we cannot deny but that they alwayes shew themselves very forward and desirous to prove the truth of what they hold against any Christian or Ministers, the which when some of us have assayed to bring to passe, in desire to bring their poore erring soules from their errors, the Ministers have all refused, whereby if not prevented by the power which the good hand of providence hath committed to this honourable Assembly the poore soules of those already gone astray, are not onely like to perish, but many others are daily in danger to be led into the same error by them, inasmuch as they are weak, and cannot answer them, and the Ministers either for want of love will not, or because it is the truth they hold, they dare not oppose it.

In consideration whereof your humble suppliants intreat this honourable Assembly, that forasmuch as they do acknowledge their willingness, and would rejoyce at an opportunity to manifest the things which they hold before you, or your godly Committee, either here or at Guild-Hall in London, and are willing, as they say, through the strength of God, although they be no schollers, yet if any of the most grave Doctors of the Synod will oppose them before you or your Committee, they beleve that God will enable them either to manifest what they hold to be the truth of God, or els to be willing thankfully to receive conviction, and thereupon to renounce any error or errors they hold, and embrace the truth, and practice the same with us. We therefore humbly intreat you to call them before you, and let them answer according to their desire, that so error may be abhorred, and truth embraced inasmuch as they have declared to us in print, that they abhorre all errors which they have light to discover, as namely universall redemption, free-will, falling away, and all things contrary to wholesome doctrine, whereof you may further examine them. And further, forasmuch as they, although erring from us in judgment, yet are forward helpers of the cause of God, and have both in goods and persons helped forward your designs, and live peaceably with all men, and none of them chargeable, but generally helpfull to the common wealth, and seeing it is impossible for the rod to alter the judgment, but is onely peculiar to the Word by the help of the Spirit to do that, and seeing God is a jealous God, and will not loose his prerogative, nor will have men presume to judge conscience, as he sets out almost through the whole Chapter, Rom. 14. although one Judge quite contrary to another, as he instanceth both in meats and dayes, and saith, that *we shall all appeare before the judgement-seat of Christ*, and saith, *He that doubteth is damned if he eat: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin*: and seeing that they that stand so much to have all brought to one judgement, would be loath to be enforced to change their own judgements, nay they know they cannot do it, although they would, for man cannot change his owne, and much lesse ano. hers judgment, for that is onely peculiar to God to do by his Word and Spirit. If they say, it is because theirs is the truth. Is not what every man judgeth truth, truth to him, as well as what they judge is to them? And is not what a man judgeth unclean, unclean to him? Rom. 14. 14. Then remember the counsell of Christ, namely, *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets*. Then do as Gods Law commands, and his Prophets taught. Then we beseech you be not partakers of others mens sins: for when any judge men for conscience by the power they had from you, God will look on you as the doers and maintainers of it. Consider also how the prayers of all conscionable men will daily come up before God, and crie lowder against them that take away his prerogative and their liberty which he hath given them, which is as deare to conscionable men as their lives, then *Abels blood* did against *Cain*. Againe, what praise to God, and prayers, with true love to them which give to God his prerogative, and to them their due, which he hath given them, namely liberty of conscience. Then we beseech you consider, that whereas *David* saith, *Psal. 119. The Law of God is perfect, converting the soule*, seeing the Word, not the rod is able to convince the judgment, and alter the same, and seeing this honourable power hath put down some false power, we beseech you, let none rise against God and his royall prerogative: then will wrath and stripes flee away, and peace and plenty, with joy and gladnesse will come in the roome thereof, *For when our wayes please the Lord, he maketh our enemies at peace with us*. And seeing God hath put into your hearts for his glory, to cause that no wicked pamphlets or libellous books might be printed: we beseech you to grant, that no conscionable book whereto the Authours will set their names and places of dwelling, may be refused to be printed, that so errors being found out and answered, the authours may be ashamed and, and reduced to the truth, and the truths the more cleared, for the glory of God, the increase of knowledge, without which the mind is not good. And whereas they are accnsed not to allow of the execution of justice by the sword of the Magistrate, they profess, it is their hearts griefe, that the justice of their wholesome and good Lawes are no more strictly executed. Your Petitioners humbly crave, that you would take the premises into your grave considerations, and grant them such a gracious answer as God shall perswade your hearts, for the filling the hearts of his people with praises, that they and their childrens children may praise God for this Assembly till the day of Christ, and they shall be thankfull, and pray for blessings upon you and your godly proceedings.

London. 20 Septemb. 1643

From: Nath. Lath. Carier of norwiche